

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TOKYO 14466 091056Z

14

ACTION EA-09

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INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAJ-01 IO-10 OMB-01 ACDA-05 /085 W

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R 090953Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3973

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONGEN HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC HONOLULU HAWAII

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 14466

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, JA, UR

SUBJ: JAPANESE REACTION TO GROMYKO KOMMUNIST ARTICLE

1. FONOFF HAS REACTED SHARPLY TO ASSERTION BY FONMIN GROMYKO IN LATEST ISSUE OF KOMMUNIST THAT JAPANESE CLAIM TO NORTHERN TERRITORIES IS GROUNDLESS. AT OCTOBER 9 MEETING (DESCRIBED FOR US BY JAPANESE PRESS AND FIRST EAST EUROPEAN DIVDIR ARAI), DEP FONMIN ARITA TOLD AMBASSADOR TROYANOVSKY JAPAN FOUND ASSERTION AMAZING AND DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND. HE ADDED THAT ARTICLE IGNORED 1973 BREZHNEZ-TANAKA UNDERSTANDING THAT TERRITORIAL ISSUE REMAINS SUBJECT FOR NEGOTIATION. ACCORDING TO ARAI, TROYANOVSKY (WHO HAD CALLED ON ARITA TO DISCUSS THE LATEST SOV DISARMAMENT PROPOSAL), ANSWERED EVASIVELY THAT GROMYKO ARTICLE DID NOT CONTRADICT PREVIOUS AGREEMENT, AND EXPRESSED HOPE THAT "UNOFFICIAL" EXCHANGE OF VIEWS COULD BE ARRANGED ON SUBJECT IN NEAR FUTURE.

2. ARAI HAS INFORMED PRESS IN BACKGROUNDER OF GAIMUSHO BELIEF THAT GROMYKO ARTICLE IS MOST RECENT EVIDENCE OF SOVIET CAMPAIGN TO "FREEZE"

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PAGE 02 TOKYO 14466 091056Z

TERRITORIAL ISSUE AND RETURN TO EARLIER POSITION THAT NO TERRITORIAL

ISSUE EXISTS TO BE DISCUSSED WITH JAPAN. EARLIER ELEMENTS OF "CAMPAIGN" INCLUDE:

- (A) SEPTEMBER 24 SOVIET VIOLATION OF JAPANESE AIRSPACE;
- (B) SOVIET CHARGE AIRED IN IZVESTIA THAT RECENT SPEECH ON TERRITORIAL ISSUE BY MAYOR OF NEMURO, HOKKAIDO, WAS ANTI-SOVIET PROPAGANDA. (SOVIET CONSUL GENERAL IN SAPPORO THIS WEEK CANCELLED OFFICIAL VISIT TO NEMURO.);
- (C) EARLY OCTOBER PRAVDA REPORT THAT ROUTE FOR SIGHTSEEING SHIPS HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED AROUND DISPUTED KUNASHIRI ISLAND. ARAI TOLD PRESS THAT SOVIET INTENTIONS BORNE OUT BY FACT THAT SOVIETS HAD WELCOMED "UNOFFICIALLY" RECENT PROPOSALS BY KAZUSHIGE HIRASAWA (TOKYO 13284).

3. COMMENT: WE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN DEPARTMENT'S AND EMBASSY MOSCOW'S VIEW AS TO WHETHER ANY SOVIET "CAMPAIGN" UNDERWAY. WE HAVE NO CLEAR PICTURE OF A PATTERN FORMING, NOR HAVE WE SEEN EVIDENCE THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE REACTED IN ANY MEANINGFUL WAY TO THE HIRASAWA PROPOSALS. ON THE CONTRARY, AMBASSADOR TROYANOVSKY TOLD AMBASSADOR LATE SEPTEMBER THAT HIRASAWA ARTICLES WOULD NOT BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY. IN THE MEANTIME, WE THINK IT PLAUSIBLE THAT FONOFF IS ENGAGING IN A LITTLE PREVENTIVE PROPAGANDA, IDENTIFYING AND COMPLAINING LOUDLY ABOUT A THREAT THAT HAS NOT YET MATERIALIZED IN HOPES THAT IT WON'T.

SHOESMITH

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